



## *The Writer's Guild*

---

**Adjectives** — descriptive words that modify nouns — often come under fire for their cluttering quality, but often it's quality, not quantity, that is the issue. Plenty of tired adjectives are available to spoil a good sentence, but when you find just the right word for the job, enrichment ensues. Practice precision when you select words. Here's a list of adjectives:

**Adamant:** unyielding; a very hard substance

**Adroit:** clever, resourceful

**Amatory:** sexual

**Animistic:** quality of recurrence or reversion to earlier form

**Antic:** clownish, frolicsome

**Arcadian:** serene

**Baleful:** deadly, foreboding

**Bellicose:** quarrelsome (its synonym belligerent can also be a noun)

**Bilious:** unpleasant, peevish

**Boorish:** crude, insensitive

**Calamitous:** disastrous

**Caustic:** corrosive, sarcastic; a corrosive substance

**Cerulean:** sky blue

**Comely:** attractive

**Concomitant:** accompanying

**Contumacious:** rebellious

**Corpulent:** obese

**Crapulous:** immoderate in appetite

**Defamatory:** maliciously misrepresenting

**Didactic:** conveying information or moral instruction

**Dilatory:** causing delay, tardy

**Dowdy:** shabby, old-fashioned; an unkempt woman

**Efficacious:** producing a desired effect

**Effulgent:** brilliantly radiant

**Egregious:** conspicuous, flagrant

**Endemic:** prevalent, native, peculiar to an area

**Equanimeous:** even, balanced

**Execrable:** wretched, detestable

**Fastidious:** meticulous, overly delicate  
**Feckless:** weak, irresponsible  
**Fecund:** prolific, inventive  
**Friable:** brittle  
**Fulsome:** abundant, overdone, effusive

**Garrulous:** wordy, talkative  
**Guileless:** naive  
**Gustatory:** having to do with taste or eating

**Heuristic:** learning through trial-and-error or problem solving  
**Histrionic:** affected, theatrical  
**Hubristic:** proud, excessively self-confident

**Incendiary:** inflammatory, spontaneously combustible, hot  
**Insidious:** subtle, seductive, treacherous  
**Insolent:** impudent, contemptuous  
**Intransigent:** uncompromising  
**Inveterate:** habitual, persistent  
**Invidious:** resentful, envious, obnoxious

**Irksome:** annoying

**Jejune:** dull, puerile  
**Jocular:** jesting, playful  
**Judicious:** discreet

**Lachrymose:** tearful  
**Limpid:** simple, transparent, serene  
**Loquacious:** talkative  
**Luminous:** clear, shining

**Mannered:** artificial, stilted  
**Mendacious:** deceptive  
**Meretricious:** whorish, superficially appealing, pretentious  
**Minatory:** menacing  
**Mordant:** biting, incisive, pungent  
**Munificent:** lavish, generous

**Nefarious:** wicked  
**Noxious:** harmful, corrupting

**Obtuse:** blunt, stupid

**Parsimonious:** frugal, restrained  
**Pendulous:** suspended, indecisive

**Pernicious:** injurious, deadly  
**Pervasive:** widespread  
**Petulant:** rude, ill humored  
**Platitudinous:** resembling or full of dull or banal comments  
**Precipitate:** steep, speedy  
**Propitious:** auspicious, advantageous, benevolent  
**Puckish:** impish

**Querulous:** cranky, whining  
**Quiescent:** inactive, untroublesome

**Rebarbative:** irritating, repellent  
**Recalcitrant:** resistant, obstinate  
**Redolent:** aromatic, evocative  
**Rhadamanthine:** harshly strict  
**Risible:** laughable  
**Ruminative:** contemplative

**Sagacious:** wise, discerning  
**Salubrious:** healthful  
**Sartorial:** relating to attire, especially tailored fashions  
**Sclerotic:** hardening  
**Serpentine:** snake-like, winding, tempting or wily  
**Spasmodic:** having to do with or resembling a spasm, excitable, intermittent  
**Strident:** harsh, discordant; obtrusively loud

**Taciturn:** closemouthed, reticent  
**Tenacious:** persistent, cohesive,  
**Tremulous:** nervous, trembling, timid, sensitive  
**Trenchant:** sharp, penetrating, distinct  
**Turbulent:** restless, tempestuous  
**Turgid:** swollen, pompous

**Ubiquitous:** pervasive, widespread  
**Uxorious:** inordinately affectionate or compliant with a wife

**Verdant:** green, unripe  
**Voluble:** glib, given to speaking  
**Voracious:** ravenous, insatiable

**Wheedling:** flattering  
**Withering:** devastating

**Zealous:** eager, devoted